

METAMORPH

MOBILE

IS71076B: Computational Arts-Based
Research and Theory

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Metamorphmobile is an interactive installation touching on several issues brought by the development of modern society and technologies, including consumer culture, capitalism and human-machine relation. Specifically, this piece of work draws from the socioeconomic perspective of the emergent self-service technologies. Grocery self-checkout machine is one of the typical examples.

It intends to provide a joyful yet a little bit overwhelmed experience for its audience. Remind them to rethink the consumer culture and their relations with machines when they are laughing at this piece of work. It is not only about self-service technologies, it is also about the ever-growing mobile phone, AI, robot and computational industries.

DISOBEDIENT

MTV



a typical example of disobedient object

OBJECTS

Disobedient objects are often everyday items that have been turned to a new purpose. But social change is about making as much as breaking. Sometimes designing a new object creates a new way to disobey. -- V&A Museum

WHY CHOOSING COT MOBILE AND SELF-CHECKOUT MACHINE

As a popular alternative to the traditional cashier-staff checkout, there are over three hundred thousand self-checkout machines over the world. Indeed, this technology brings huge benefits to people's life, such as the reduction of staff's labour force, customer's waiting time and retailer's cost. However, its disadvantages and limitations cannot be underestimated. The classical grocery store was based on the communication and interaction between clerk and customer. The invention of self-service technologies leads to the shift of the skills and responsibilities of grocery worker. Hence getting groceries has become a much less social activity and has caused the increasing isolation of the shopper. The self-checkout machine has no expectation of socialization with the customer, as all of its responses are pre-programmed and only responsive to the inputs of the customer. Its voice guide indicates this non-social interaction. (next page)

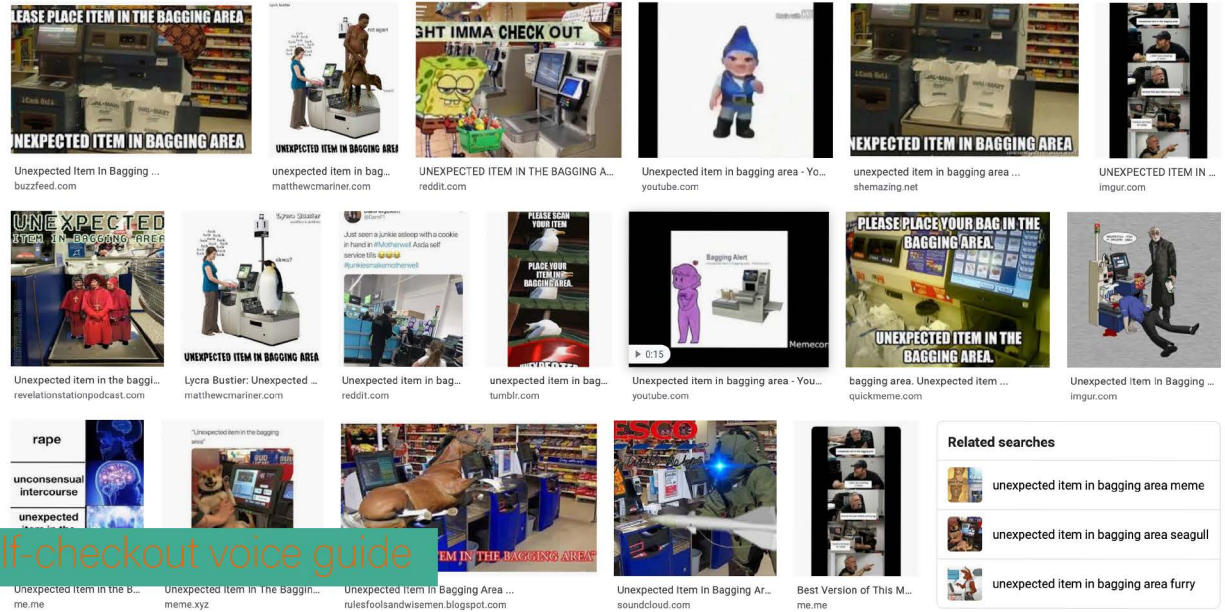


traditional cot mobile

Musical cot mobiles are proposed to aid babies' visual development and to stimulate their hearing. Therefore most of them are designed with bold and contrasting colours, and the music is mostly nursery rhymes assisting to develop phonological and phonemic awareness in children. *Metamorphmobile* follows the colour scheme of the traditional crib mobile, yet replace the rotating figures, usually cute animals or plants, with grocery goods. The music is composed with self-checkout voices which aim to help kids to get used to consumer culture and to the interaction with machines from an early stage, which further to reduce the feeling of isolation when they grow up.



annoy self-checkout voice guide



To a certain extent, the repetitive and robotic voice guide from self-checkout machine produces noise pollution. As complained by innumerable customers, some retailers replaced with more human-sounding voices, even novelty voices (i.e. Poundland used the voice of Yoda and Elvis Presley). Still, there are a large number of people online sharing their funny stories about the uncomfortable feelings towards the voice guide. Also, the negative experiences of self-checkout machines are the motivations of numerous trendy memes. Additionally, in 2018, a video of the donk remix of Tesco self-checkout voices gone viral online (see <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=721434511533527>). Those examples are the original inspirations for 21st century cot mobile. In this piece of work, the voice from self-checkout machine is a symbol of modern consumerism and of the complex and controversial relationship between human and technology.



metamorphmobile



remove this item before continuing

this now can be placed in your bag

please take your change

all your points add up

thank you for shopping at

would you like a receipt

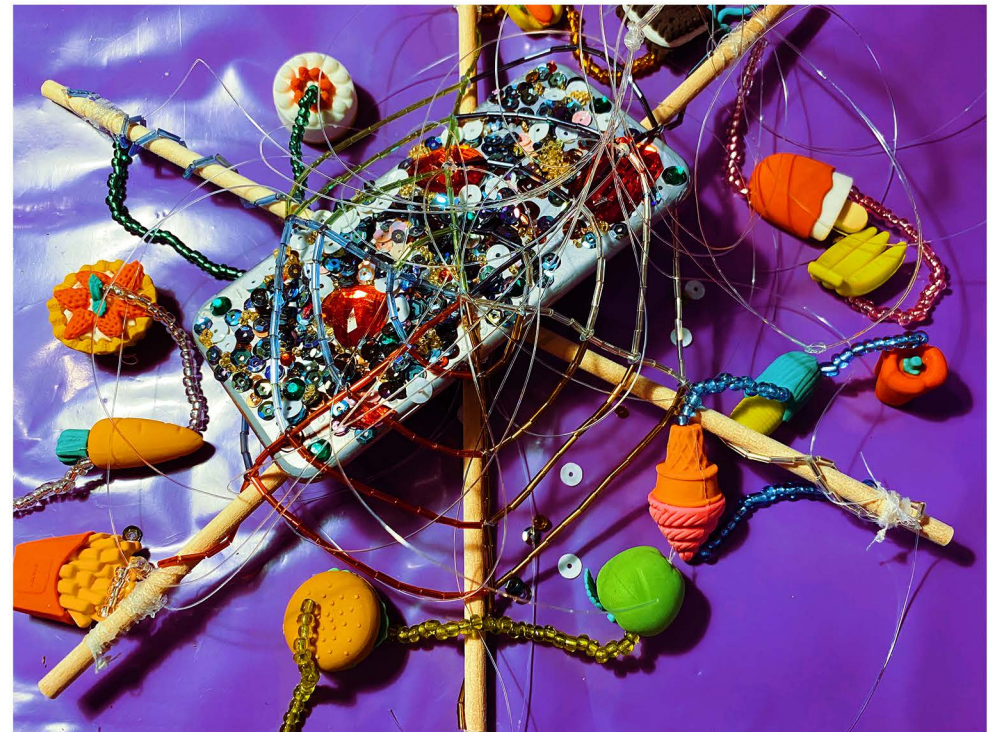


INSPIRATION

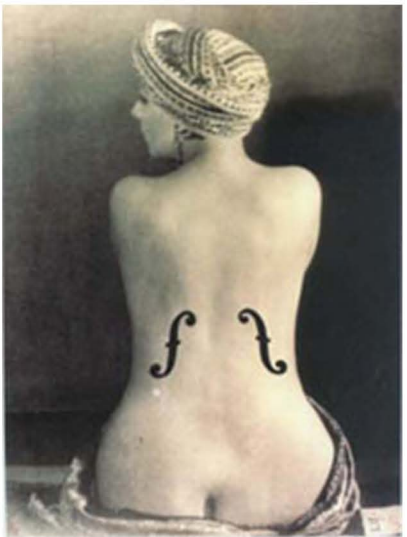
THE REASERCH OF ARTWORKS WHICH ARE BASED ON/ INSPIRED BY KID'S TOY



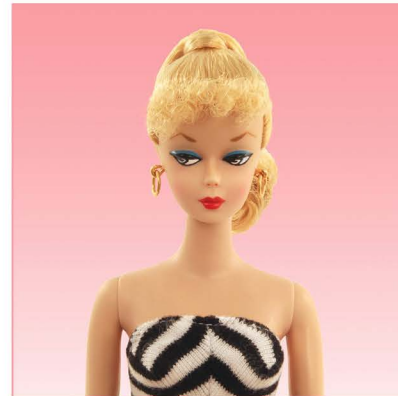
material



Robert Bradford



Jocelyn Grivaud



Beau Dunn

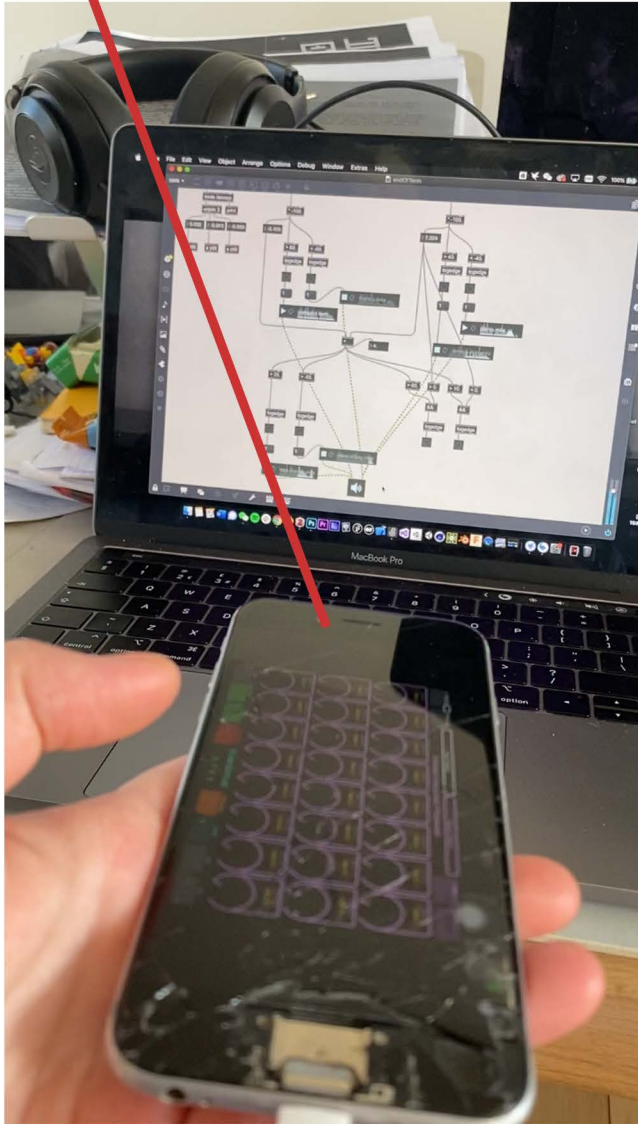


MAKING PROCESSES



MAX MSP

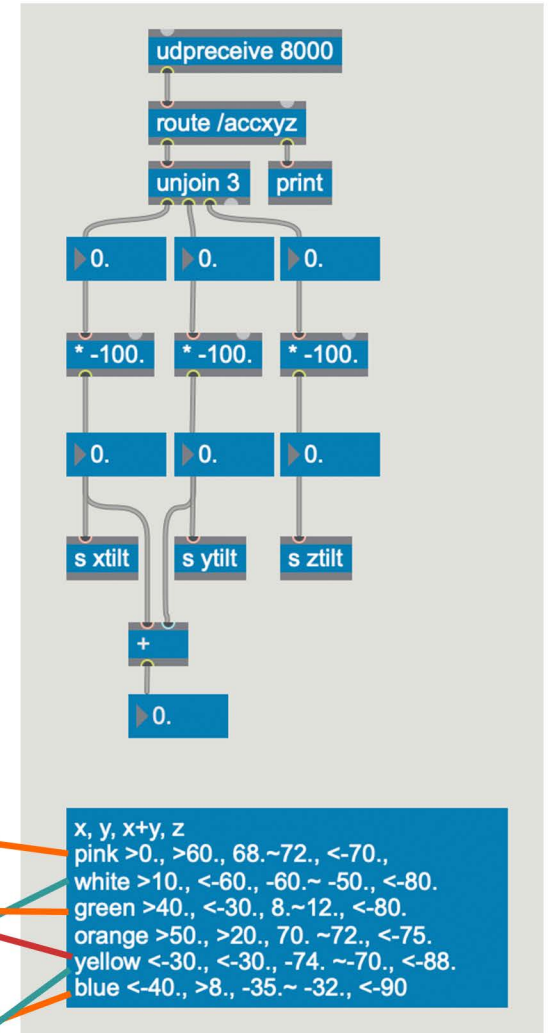
touch OSC



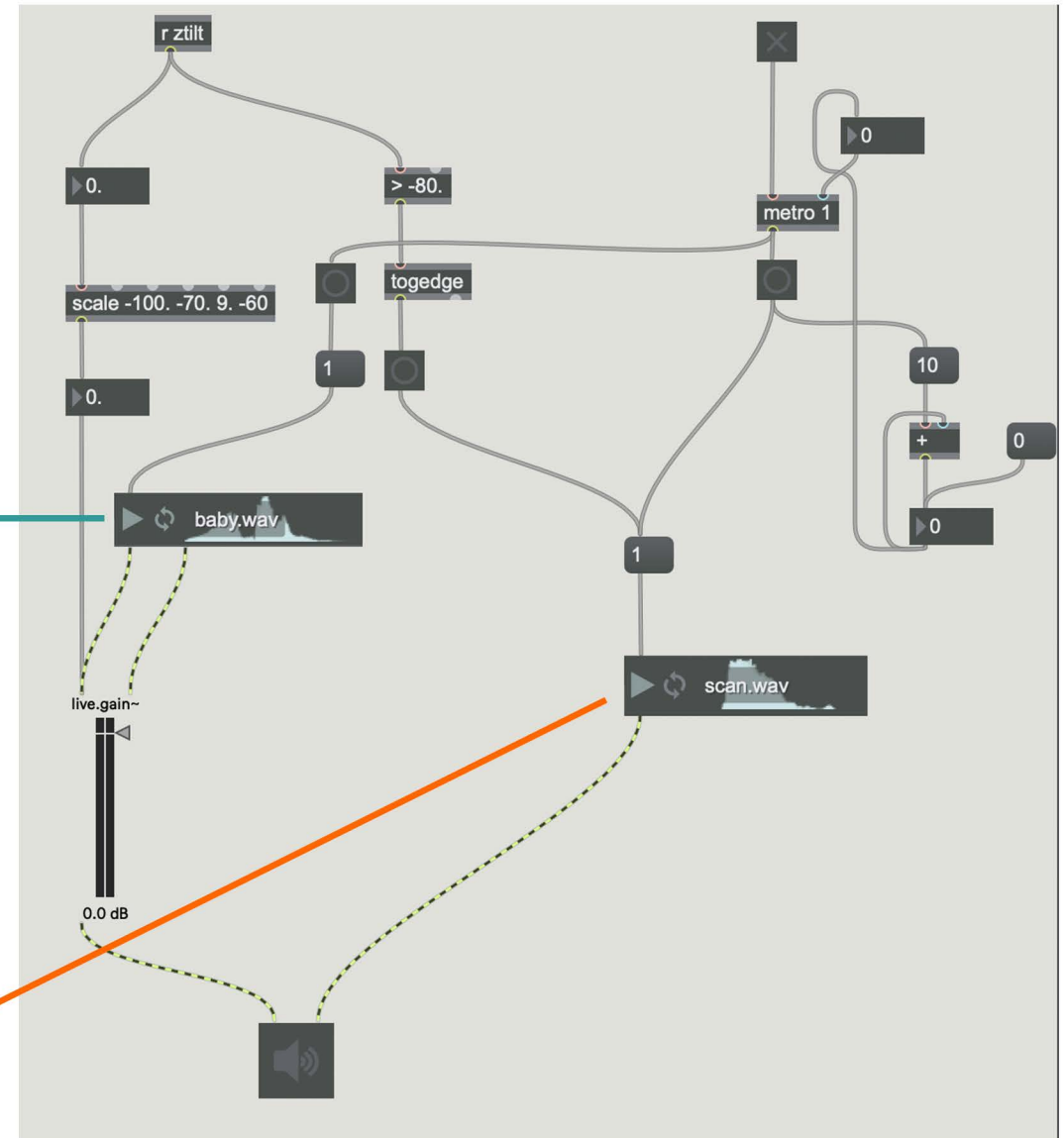
test

I calculated every angle's x, y accelerations so each one triggers different sentence:

- Unexpected item in bagging area
- Remove this item before continuing
- This now can be placed in your bag
- All your points add up
- Please take your change
- Thank you for shopping, goodbye



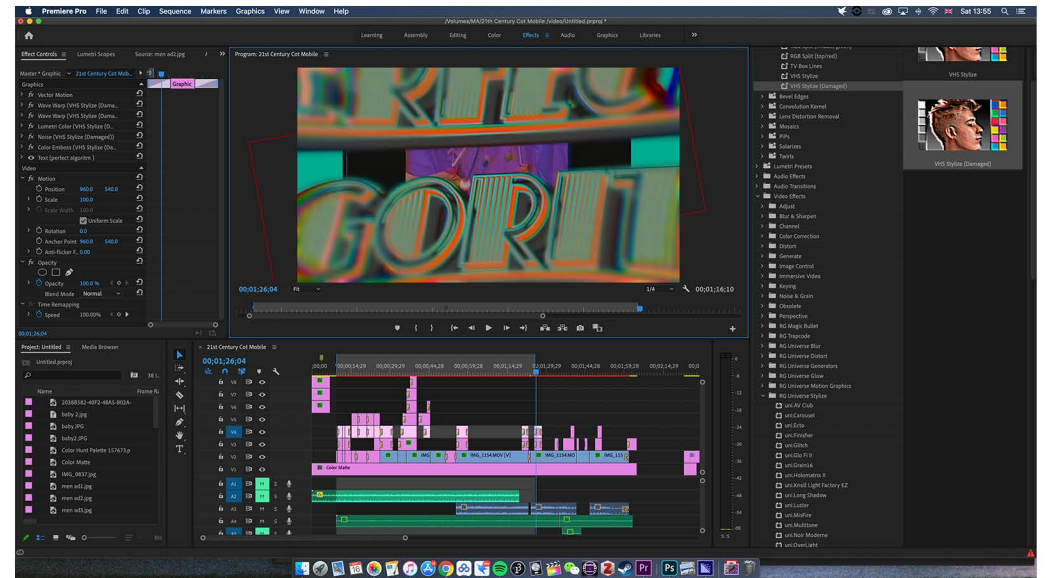
The volume of baby's crying sound is controlled by the iPhone's z acceleration. When one string drops, the volume decreases. If you don't want the baby to cry, you have to constantly "buy" (drop the string down).



The scan sound from self-checkout machine ascends at the beginning and beep every time when one string drops down.

The final presentation of *Metamorphobile* is a vintage advertisement, which aims to emphasize the point of consumerism. At the same time, the voiceover in the advertisement helps the audience to understand this piece of work.

It can also be seen as an independent interactive installation.



FINAL

PRESENTATION

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